

Message Text

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ACTION EA-12

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 SS-15 SP-02 H-01 INR-10 L-03 PM-05
NSC-05 DODE-00 CIAE-00 PA-01 OMB-01 /056 W
-----079676 231103Z /12-S
R 221021Z AUG 78
FM AMEMBASSY TAIPEI
TO SECSTATE WASHDC 8687
INFO USICA WASHDC

C O N F I D E N T I A L TAIPEI 05592

E.O. 11652: GDS
TAGS: PEPR, EAID, TW
SUBJECT: PRESS REPORTS OF FUTURE OF JCRR

REF: TAIPEI 4656

1. NEWS ARTICLES ON THE FUTURE OF THE JOINT COMMISSION ON RURAL RECONSTRUCTION (JCRR) APPEARED AUGUST 21 IN THE GREAT CHINA EVENING NEWS AND IN THE UNITED DAILY NEWS (UDN) AND CHINA DAILY NEWS (CDN) AUGUST 22. STORIES APPEAR TO BE PRIMARILY BASED ON COMMENTS BY JCRR OFFICIALS WHO ALLEGEDLY DID NOT "RULE OUT" THE POSSIBILITY THAT THE U.S. INTENDS TO TERMINATE JCRR AGREEMENT. ONE "HIGH OFFICIAL" OF JCRR STATED THE QUESTION OF JCRR'S EXISTENCE HAS NOTHING TO DO WITH THE "SO-CALLED" U.S. NORMALIZATION PROBLEM. UDN ACCOUNT SAID ONE POSSIBILITY FOR REORGANIZATION OF JCRR WOULD BE TO MAKE IT AN EXECUTIVE YUAN AGRICULTURAL CONSTRUCTION COMMITTEE, AND NOTED THAT THIS IS A GOOD TIME FOR JCRR TO REORGANIZE ITSELF INTO GROUPOID SYSTEM IN KEEPING WITH THE FUTURE ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT OF THE ROC.

2. THE CDN ACCOUNT QUOTED JCRR AS SAYING IT HAD NOT REPEAT NOT RECEIVED A FORMAL NOTE FROM THE U.S. REGARDING
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THE JCRR AGREEMENT; UDN AND GCEN VERSIONS CARRIED EMBASSY SPOKESMAN'S COMMENT THAT JCRR AGREEMENT WAS STILL VALID. GREAT CHINA EVENING NEWS STORY, WHICH APPEARS TO BE THE BASIS FOR OTHER ACCOUNTS, BEGAN BY STATING THAT USG HAS DECIDED FORMALLY TO INFORM THE GROUPOID OF THE INTENTION TO TERMINATE THE AGREEMENT UNDER WHICH JCRR WAS ESTABLISHED, BUT DOES NOT GIVE A SOURCE FOR THIS ASSERTION.

THE STORY CLAIMS REASON FOR TERMINATION IS THAT AGREEMENT HAS OUTLIVED PURPOSE FOR WHICH IT WAS SIGNED, AND SAID ISSUE OF JCRR IS NOT RELATED TO NORMALIZATION QUESTION.

3. IN RESPONSE TO PRESS STORIES EMBASSY PREPARED CONTINGENCY PRESS GUIDANCE (PARA 4) WHICH WAS CHECKED WITH JCRR CHAIRMAN ROBERT LEE. MOFA WAS INFORMED OF CONTENTS OF PRESS GUIDANCE. EMBASSY COMMENT WAS PREPARED ON IF-ASKED BASIS AND SUBSEQUENTLY GIVEN TO LOCAL REPORTER WHO QUERIED MISSION SPOKESMAN.

4. FOLLOWING IS FULL TEXT OF EMBASSY COMMENT:
BEGIN TEXT. WE HAVE NOTED RECENT PRESS SPECULATION REPORTING VIEWS ATTRIBUTED TO CHINESE GOVERNMENT OFFICIALS CONCERNING THE FUTURE OF THE SINO-AMERICAN FUND AND AMERICAN PARTICIPATION IN THE JOINT COMMISSION ON RURAL RECONSTRUCTION. THE FUND AND THE AMERICAN PARTICIPATION BEGAN MANY YEARS AGO WHEN THE UNITED STATES WAS PROVIDING SUBSTANTIAL ECONOMIC ASSISTANCE TO THE REPUBLIC OF CHINA AND CONSULTING CLOSELY ON ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT PROGRAMS HERE. FOR MANY YEARS ECONOMIC AID HAS NO LONGER BEEN REQUIRED AND TAIWAN'S ECONOMIC PROGRESS ON ITS OWN IS AN ESTABLISHED FACT. THEREFORE IT IS APPROPRIATE THAT THE FUTURE OF THE AGREEMENT AND AMERICAN PARTICIPATION IN JCRR BE DISCUSSED BETWEEN THE TWO GOVERNMENTS. END TEXT.
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5. COMMENT: WE HOPE THIS RESPONSE AND PREVIOUS GROC AND EMBASSY STATEMENTS THAT JCRR AGREEMENT REMAINS IN EFFECT WILL DEFUSE STORY LOCALLY WITHOUT REMOVING IMPRESSION THAT SOME MOVEMENT ON JCRR IS TAKING PLACE. UNGER

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Message Attributes

Automatic Decaptioning: X
Capture Date: 01 jan 1994
Channel Indicators: n/a
Current Classification: UNCLASSIFIED
Concepts: PRESS COMMENTS, DEVELOPMENT PROGRAMS
Control Number: n/a
Copy: SINGLE
Draft Date: 22 aug 1978
Decaption Date: 01 jan 1960
Decaption Note:
Disposition Action: RELEASED
Disposition Approved on Date:
Disposition Case Number: n/a
Disposition Comment: 25 YEAR REVIEW
Disposition Date: 20 Mar 2014
Disposition Event:
Disposition History: n/a
Disposition Reason:
Disposition Remarks:
Document Number: 1978TAIPEI05592
Document Source: CORE
Document Unique ID: 00
Drafter: n/a
Enclosure: n/a
Executive Order: GS
Errors: N/A
Expiration:
Film Number: D780344-0800
Format: TEL
From: TAIPEI
Handling Restrictions: n/a
Image Path:
ISecure: 1
Legacy Key: link1978/newtext/t19780836/aaaabdnw.tel
Line Count: 99
Litigation Code IDs:
Litigation Codes:
Litigation History:
Locator: TEXT ON-LINE, ON MICROFILM
Message ID: 4ccabf5d-c288-dd11-92da-001cc4696bcc
Office: ACTION EA
Original Classification: CONFIDENTIAL
Original Handling Restrictions: n/a
Original Previous Classification: n/a
Original Previous Handling Restrictions: n/a
Page Count: 2
Previous Channel Indicators: n/a
Previous Classification: CONFIDENTIAL
Previous Handling Restrictions: n/a
Reference: 78 TAIPEI 4656
Retention: 0
Review Action: RELEASED, APPROVED
Review Content Flags:
Review Date: 26 jul 2005
Review Event:
Review Exemptions: n/a
Review Media Identifier:
Review Release Date: n/a
Review Release Event: n/a
Review Transfer Date:
Review Withdrawn Fields: n/a
SAS ID: 1655433
Secure: OPEN
Status: NATIVE
Subject: PRESS REPORTS OF FUTURE OF JCRR
TAGS: PEPR, EAID, TW, JRR
To: STATE
Type: TE
vdkgvwkey: odb://SAS/SAS.dbo.SAS_Docs/4ccabf5d-c288-dd11-92da-001cc4696bcc
Review Markings:
Sheryl P. Walter
Declassified/Released
US Department of State
EO Systematic Review
20 Mar 2014
Markings: Sheryl P. Walter Declassified/Released US Department of State EO Systematic Review 20 Mar 2014